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DROPOUTS FROM THE GREAT CITY SCHOOLS

VOL. 1

TECHNICAL ANALYSES OF DROPOUT STATISTICS IN SELECTED DISTRICTS

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During the last several years considerable national attention has been focused on school dropouts. Most of the major television networks, talk shows and topical programs have given time to the issue in the recent past, with much of the discussion built around our inner-city public school systems. This attention appears to be justified because of recent data showing nearly one in four ninth graders never complete their high school education and that the cost to the nation of this inefficiency amounts to a staggering $13.0 billion a year in lost tax revenues and increased social spending.

At one time, the U.S. could tolerate high dropout rates, for those who did could find ready employment in an economy requiring formal education but for a few. That situation has clearly changed on two fronts: the job market now demands considerably more skill than it did at one time and the country as a whole faces stronger competition from other countries; and secondly, the aging of the population will force our young to be ever more productive. To keep our current high standard of living, we will have no choice but to educate more of our citizenry and to educate them better.

The interest of the big city schools in this topic is almost self evident, but it is not universally evident to the nation why this problem needs to be solved in these schools first and foremost. Nearly 40% of all the nation's minority and about 30% of all its poor children are educated in one of the cities compromising the Council of the Great City Schools. Recent demographic projections indicate that this group will find itself the majority population in some states by the turn of the Century. To the extent that this population does not have access to share in the classic American dream, to that extent the dream itself will die.

To address the important issue of dropouts from our schools, the Council of the Great City Schools undertook a three-pronged effort. One was to convene its members in New York City from November 5-9th, 1986, at a national conference on dropouts to share promising approaches to the problem and to hear from experts on it. The second portion of the effort was a legislative one. At the initiation of the Chicago Public Schools, Chicago and the Council teamed up to draft the Dropout Prevention and ReEntry Act, spearheaded by Rep. Charles Hayes (D-IL). This legislation has acted as the lead effort in the drive to bring the resources of the federal government to bear on the issue. The bill itself, which authorized a modest $50.0 million for dropout prevention demonstration grants, was passed overwhelmingly by the House of Representatives but died on the Senate floor in the waning days of the 99th Congress. It is the Council's hope to reinitiate the bill in the upcoming session of Congress.

The third major effort undertaken by the Council involved research. Three primary concerns spurred this effort. The first involved the need to know how various program strategies helped to reduce dropout rates and with what kinds of youth. To date an extremely small amount of research exists that could guide local program and policy designers on what their most effective efforts could be. The second major concern that spurred research involvement was the need by individual school districts to know whether their dropout situation was any better or worse than other districts, and whether the nature of the problem differed from place to place or group to group.

The final but most immediate concern spurring research involvement was the publication by the Department of Education in January, 1984 of the "State Education Statistics" Wall Chart showing the U.S. graduation rate of only 72.8%. At the time and since, the statistics were used by the Department to show a negative correlation between federal education expenditures and various educational indicators. The Research Directors of the Council were particularly disturbed by the misuse of the statistics and the misleading nature of the data, prompting an attempt by them to develop more accurate information on dropout rates.

The Council and its Research Directors began a series of meetings to meet these research and data needs. It was decided to divide the work into two phases with two separate reports, of which this is the first. The initial phase would attempt to make sense of the extremely disparate ways in

which cities keep their dropout data and to advise various policy makers on the development of common metrics for measuring the problem; and the second phase would be to collect and analyze data on program strategies and effectiveness. The purpose of this document is to report on the first phase. The second volume of this report will be devoted to program issues and will be published in 1987.

Methodology for Survey

The initial hope of the Council's Research Directors was that their efforts could lead directly to a common metric by which all of the major cities would report their dropout data. The task of doing this was initiated by the DRE Steering Committee of the Council. The technical work by the Committee began in the Spring of 1984 at the Annual Meeting of Division H of the American Educational Research Association. The initial effort involved little more than an informal survey of the meeting's attendants on how each district reported and defined its dropouts. The information was used by the chair of the Steering Committee to develop the survey instrument found in the appendix of this report. A draft version of the survey was reviewed at a meeting of the DRE's at the Council's Fall meeting in Albuquerque in November, 1984. Once finalized, the survey was reviewed by staff at the Council of the Great City Schools and mailed with cover letter to member city DRE's in February, 1985.

The initial instructions on the survey specified that member districts should complete the form by June 30, 1985, in one of two ways. Districts which

could report their dropout data according to a definition agreed-upon by the group at their Albuquerque meeting would do so for the 1984-85 school year using Form A. Districts which could not report their data according to the agreed upon definition would report for the 1984-85 school year using their definition, as long as it was specified. The agreed upon definition used by the DRE's was as follows:

> "A dropout will be defined as any person who leaves school prior to graduation or completion of a formal high school education or legal equivalent, who does not within 45 school days enter another public or private educational institution or school program."

The second stage of the initiative was to involve all member school systems moving toward the uniform definition for the 1985-86 school year, with a second survey to collect these data.

In May, 1985, a second letter was mailed to DRE's reminding them of the survey and its June 30th deadline. Unforeseen was that most districts could not meet the deadline because data for the just-completed school year was still being compiled. By the September, 1985, meeting of the DRE's in Pittsburgh, however, data from 16 Council disticts had been received. One additional district submitted data since that meeting, bringing the total number of responses to 17 of the Council's then-35 members--or approximately a 50% response rate (see Appendix for a list of respondants).

At the Pittsburgh meeting, the DRE's agreed to compile the results of the survey without waiting for additional responses or attempting to boost the response rate further. It also became clear from a preliminary look at

the returns that only one of the 17 responses used the agreed upon definition, making all responses noncomparable (see Table 1). The DRE's decided at that point to compile what responses were available into a technical report on how differently the dropout rates were calculated in each LEA and to make policy recommendations for further development of a common dropout metric. This report is the result.

One final meeting of the Research Steering Committee was held on this issue. The group met once again in January, 1986, in Long Beach to review a draft of this report. It was agreed at that point to drop all actual data on dropouts from the study because of the extreme variations in the findings and the utter lack of comparability in the data. Further meetings of the research group will be held to discuss the differences in the reporting methods described in this report and to decide at what point and how quickly to pursue the goal of a common metric for all city districts.

Differences in Dropout Rate Reporting:

Differences in dropout rates from city to city appeared from our survey to fall into two broad categories: reporting differences and uncontrollable community differences. The first category could be further subdivided into differences over how to count a student and how to count a dropout. In certain ways, differences in rates had more to do with how enrollment was defined and used in the denominator than how dropouts were defined and used in the numerator.

Table 1

Dropout Definitions Used by Responding Districts to Complete Council Survey

1. Albuquerque: Any student who leaves or is disenrolled from a school without attaining a diploma for any reason except transferring to another educational institution, attendance in a vocational training program, or death.

2. Atlanta: Any person who leaves school prior to graduation or completion of a formal high school education or legal equivalent, who does not within 45 days enter another public or private educational institution or school program. (Council definition)

3. Chicago: Any student 16 years or older who has been removed from the enrollment roster for any reason other than death, extended illness, graduation, or completion of a program of studies and did not transfer to another school system.

4. Cleveland: Any pupil who was enrolled in the school district but did not return to school at the beginning of the school year or did not complete the school year in question because of withdrawal to other than an educational program for which the State Board of Education prescribes minimum standards. Dropouts would include pupils withdrawn for the following reasons: work permit; over 18 years of age; armed services; runaway; cannot be located by school district; marriage or pregnancy and not enrolled in instruction for which the State Board of Education prescribes minimum standards; institutional placement without a program for which the State Board of Education prescribes standards; adult education without verified enrollment; and expulsion if not required to re-enroll because of being at least 18 years of age. Specifically excluded from the dropout enumeration are pupils withdrawn for the following reasons: death; illness, approved home instruction; transfer to another school district or educational program for which the State Board of Education prescribes minimum standards; institutional placement with a program for which the State Board of Education prescribes standards; and adult education where enrollment is verified. (Ohio definition)

5. Dade County: Any student who, during a particular school year, is enrolled in school and leaves such school for any reason except death before graduation or completion of a program of studies and without transferring to another public or private school or other educational institutions.

6. Detroit: Any student who leaves high school for any reason other than graduation, transfer to another program (not G.E.D.), or death.

7. Indianapolis: Any entering freshman who does not graduate with their class.

8. Los Angeles: Any senior high school student who left school before graduating because of overage, went to work full-time, institutionalization, entered military, pregnant, marriage, excluded or their whereabouts were unknown.

9. Milwaukee: Any student who stops attending and has no intention of re-enrolling in another diploma granting school.

10. Minneapolis: Any student who has left the school and school district for one of the following reasons: 1.) quit school after reaching compulsory attendance age, 2.) enlisted in The Armed Services, or 3.) left because of marriage. (Minnesota definition).

11. New York: Any student who left school during the school year who did not within the same period re-enroll in another educational setting, and who had not been counted as a dropout in previous years. Students can be legally discharged at age 17 (or age 16 with an employment certificate). Students over 14 who are not found after a search by The Bureau of Attandance are considered dropouts.

12. Norfolk: Any pupil coded as a W8 at the end of the school year (in June). Any pupil who withdraws during the school year for any reason other than transfer to some other school, promotion, graduation, or death and does not return to school within at least 15 days will be coded a W8 at the end of the school year.

13. Omaha: Any student who leaves school before graduation or completion of the 12th grade for any reason other than transferring to another school district. This includes all students who dropped out, were expelled/excluded or dies.

14. Philadelphia: Any pupil leaving the public school system before graduation without transferring to another school. Dropout withdrawals can only occur among pupils in grades 7-12 or UG or Special Education equivalent pupils who are 14 through 20 years old.

15. Portland: Any student registered in grades 9-12 at a regular high school who left school and did not return or graduate between October 1 and June 30, 1985.

16. Seattle: Any student who leaves school for any reason, except death, before graduation or completion of a program of studies and without transferring to another school. An individual is considered a dropout whether his dropping occurs during or between regular school terms.

17. Toledo: Any pupil who was enrolled in the school district but did not return to school at the beginning of the school year or did not complete the school year in question because of withdrawal to other than an educational program for which the State Board of Education prescribes minimum standards. Dropouts would include pupils withdrawn for the following reasons: work permit; over 18 years of age: armed services; runaway; cannot be located by school district; marriage or pregnancy and not enrolled in instruction for which the State Board of Education prescribes minimum standards, institutional placement without a program for which the State Board of Education prescribes standards; adult education without verified enrollment; and expulsion if not required to re-enroll because of being at least 18 years of age. Specifically excluded from the dropout enumeration are pupils withdrawn for the following reasons: death, illness, approved home instruction; transfer to another school district or educational program for which the State Board of Education prescribes minimum standards; institutional placement with a program for which the State Board of Education prescribes standards; and adult education where enrollment is verified. (Onio definition)

a. Defining and Computing Enrollment. In general, three types of enrollment calculations were used among the respondents for the purpose of computing dropout rates: average enrollment over time, enrollment on a fixed date, and cumulative enrollment. Using the first type at the time of the survey were Albuquerque and Cleveland. In both instances the districts used an average daily membership (ADM) but of differing lengths of time. The second type, i.e. enrollment as of a fixed date, was used most often by the responding districts but the "fixed date" itself showed enormous variation. Most common, however, was a date at the beginning of the school year. One district, however, used an end-of-school-year fixed date (Norfolk, June 15th). Dates at the beginning of the school year clustered around October 1 (Seattle, Portland), with Toledo using Friday of the first full week in October; Chicago and New York using October 31st; Milwaukee using the third Friday of the school year; Dade County using the last school day of the first month; and Detroit using December 1st.

The third type of enrollment computation involved a cumulative count over the course of the school year. Atlanta and Philadelphia used this particular method by which all names appearing on the school system's rolls over the course of the year were counted. In neither case was the length of time students were enrolled taken into particular account.

Obviously, none of the three methods are any better than the others but each can result in distorted dropout rates in one direction or another, and can make comparability that much harder to secure. Cumulative counting, for instance, probably makes the greatest sense as a way of computing enrollments for dropout purposes since dropouts themselves are counted cumulatively. This method, however, inflates enrollments and thereby suppresses the overall dropout rate. The Philadelphia schools, for instance estimates that the cumulative enrollment counting method inflates enrollment by about 10%. If this figure is accurate, then the Philadelphia annual dropout rate would increase by about one percentage point by changing the denominator in that rate from a cumulative count to a fixed-date count.

The fixed date method of computing enrollment has its own set of difficulties, however. The closer that date is to the beginning of the school year, the less likely the count is accurate, particularly in big city school districts with high mobility and transiency rates. School systems in cities with large numbers of migrant or seasonal workers, refugees and immigrants will probably have higher overall dropout rates by using a fixed-date method than using a cumulative count.

The ADM method of computing enrollment is a sensible compromise between the fixed-date and cumulative counting methods, except that ADM is a differently calculated metric than the one used to count the dropouts. ADM is also not a metric that all LEA's use on a regular basis.

If we could consider a fourth general method of counting enrollment, then it would be multi-year cohort counting. The three just discussed involved single year reports only and are the general focus of this report. A number of districts are doing or are planning cohort studies, however. Indianapolis, for instance, based all of its computations for this study on an analysis of the system's "holding power." An analysis of holding power or cohort analysis by the Milwaukee schools over a four year period provides an excellent example of the method and of the differing rates that it yields.

In September, 1980, the Milwaukee Public Schools enrolled 7,963 ninth graders. By June, 1984, the system had graduated 3,654 (or 46%) of those students; 87 (1%) had received a G.E.D.; 547 (7%) were staying on for a fifth year in the system; 592 (7%) had enrolled in an alternative education program; 962 (12%) had left the system but continued their education in another LEA; and 2121 (27%) had dropped out for one reason or another. This 27% four year dropout rate when divided by 4 (years), which is how the district makes the caculation, yields a "yearly" rate of 6 3/4 An examination of the single school year (1983-84) rate for grades 9-12, however, reveals a rate of 10.7%, using the fixed-date method of enrollment counting.

A final variation in the enrollment counting procedures involved the counting of ungraded, special education or alternative program students. Many school systems enroll ungraded students, i.e, students who are on the rolls but who are not assigned to a particular grade, and have special enrollment categories for special education, alternative or part-time students that are separate from the official enrollments. These kinds of students, however, are not necessarily included in the enrollment base for dropout computation purposes. Responding LEA's either did not count them at all in their dropout reports or computed separate rates for the special categories.

It was impossible from the survey to determine how much variation in the rates was due to each method of enrollment computation. What was clear, however, was that enrollment introduced as much if not more variation in the rates as dropouts themselves did.

b. Defining and Computing Dropouts. Three major issues emerged from the Council's survey: 1.) who was included or excluded from dropout counts in each LEA; 2.) what type of verification was required before coding a student as a dropout; and 3.) how long must a student be out before being considered a dropout. The latter issue and problems associated with who collects the information will be discussed in the next section. The central issue in this section will be the counting of the dropouts.

There was, as expected, enormous variation in who was counted as having dropped out of school. The survey was of little utility, unfortunately, in uncovering this variation and only slightly better were individual school system dropout reports. There was little way to determine from these reports how differing types of students were coded because the codes themselves differ and many types of students were not mentioned as belonging to any code in particular. For instance, most of the responding districts did not report any specific code for a student who had left formal schooling because he/she had been arrested, but incarcerated students were commonly included as dropouts unless they were enrolled in school-run or G.E.D. prison educational program. To begin helping to solve that problem, responding districts' individual coding categories and dropout reports were culled to compile a master list of possible variations in dropout counts. Student categories were then added to the master list after discussions with sample responding districts. All responding districts were then called and asked whether the dropout data submitted on the Council's survey had included each category of student. While necessarily imprecise, the results gave a first look at the extent to which the responding districts agreed on whom was counted as a dropout (see Table 2).

While the results of this informal phone survey showed a great deal of variation, it was also clear that there was general agreement on a number of categories. For example, we found all respondents agreeing that a student who had dropped out in one year was not double-counted the next unless the student had returned at some point and then re-dropped. Also, students over the compulsory age of attendance were uniformly counted as dropouts no matter how old they got before leaving school without graduating. And finally, all respondents agreed that a student who was known to have transferred to another LEA or to a private school was not a dropout.

Students who had left school for pregnancy or marriage were also universally categorized as dropouts. A number of districts, however, indicated that there were active programs to keep such students in school and that many districts made informal arrangements with the students to return to classes after some period of absence.

Just short of unanimity was a number of categories where there was general agreement but rather interesting exceptions. All but two districts agreed that if a student had died then he/she was not considered a dropout. Runnaways in all but one district (Philadelphia) were counted as dropouts unless they were later determined as having enrolled in some other school system. Philadelphia coded such students as "non-dropout withdrawals". Minneapolis was the only district to count a non-returning suspended student as a non-dropout All other districts defined such individuals as dropouts, although students in many cases were listed as truant for differing lengths of time before being transferred into the dropout category.

TABLE 2
PERCENT OF AGREEMENT AMONG DISTRICT REPORTS OF TYPES OF STUDENTS INCLUDED IN DROPOUT COUNT

TYPE OF STUDENT	ALBUQUERQUE	ATLANTA	CHICAGO	CLEVELAND	DADE COUNTY	DETROIT	LOS ANGELES	MILWAUKEE	ROCHESTER	NEW YORK	NORFOLK	OMAHA	PHILADELPHIA	PORTLAND	SEATTLE	TOLEDO	%
1. Student who has died							X					X					12.5%
2. Student who leaves school[a] one and returns the next	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	100.0
3. Student who is a runaway	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	93.8
4. Student who is suspended and does not return	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X	X	93.8
5. Student who is expelled (unless found to re-enroll in private school or another LEA)	X	X	X	c	e	w	e	e	X				d		X		62.5
6. Student who leaves because of pregnancy or marriage	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	100.0
7. Student who is over the compulsory age for school attendance (age differs)	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	e	X	X	X	X	100.0
8. Student who has joined the Armed Forces	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	f	X	X	100.0
9. Student who has left to pursue a G.E.D. in any kind of program			X	X	X	X	X				X	X	X				50.0
10. Student is under grade nine or seven or under a specific age	X									8		X					18.8
11. Students who are in families of seasonal workers (migrant students) if transfer with no record request	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	75.0
12. Students who are incarcerated	i	X	i	X	X		X	i	i	X		i		X	X	X	50.0
13. Students who may be exempt from state compulsory attendance laws	j	uk		j	j	j		j	j	j	j			j	j	j	68.8
14. Students who graduate ahead of their classes						X											6.3
15. Students who were counted as dropouts the previous year									X								6.3
16. Students who have entered approved home instruction (where such programs exist)	k		l										n				0.0
17. Students who transferred to an unlicensed or uncredentialed school or program[o]			X	o		X	uk			X						X	35.0
18. Students who are no longer residence of the district but know to transfer to other LEA														X			6.3
19. Special education students separately enrolled or exempt from minimum competency exams	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X							75.0
20. Limited English-proficient students exempt from minimum competency exams	X		X	X	X	X		X	X	X	@	X	X	X	X	X	81.3
21. Students who transfer to Job Corps	p	uk	X	X	X	X	X	X		X		X	X	X	X	X	81.3
22. Students who transfer to another LEA or to a private school																	0.0
23. Students who are physically, emotionally or mentally unable to attend school but were enrolled at one time	X		q			q		X			X	X		X		X	37.5
24. Students who dropout over the Summer i.e., leave in June and fail to return in September	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X			X	X		X	X	81.3
25. Students who cannot be located	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	r	X	X	X	X	X		87.5
26. Students who are ill at home or hospitalized over an extended period	s	X															6.3
27. Students who leave with a work permit or for employment	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	t		X	87.5
28. Students who enroll in adult education or night school	u		u		X			X			X		X				25.0
29. Students who transfer to a vocational, technical or occupational school	uk	uk	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	uk	X	X	X	75.0
30. Students who leave because needed at home	uk	uk	uk	uk	uk		uk	uk	uk	uk	uk	uk	uk	uk	uk	uk	---

a. All districts count these students as dropouts only once, i.e. in the year in which student left. Students not cumulatively counted.
b. Counted as truant initially, then as dropout.
c. Exempt for one semester only; count as dropout if do not return next semester or are over age 18.
d. Does not expel students.
e. Up to age 21.
f. Counted as dropout unless known to be seeking a G.E.D.
g. If student is under grade 7 but over age 14.
h.
i. Student not counted as dropout if known to be seeking a G.E.D. in prison.
j. No exemptions.
k. No provisions for home instruction.
l. Unless at home for religious reasons.
m. Such students not put on rolls.
n. Student is not removed from rolls because would be in violation of compulsory attendance laws until age 18.
o. School system usually does not have information on which non-LEA schools are credited.
p. Not counted if pursuing G.E.D. as part of Job Corps.
q. Exempt from attendance or required to be institutionalized.
r. Counted as "unknown".
s. Counted as dropout if student does not accept instruction when capable of performing it.
t. Counted as dropout unless attending class under work study.
u. Not counted if in degree program or making up small number of credits to graduate
uk. Unknown

A similar category involved students who were at home ill or were hospitalized for an extended period of time. Again, such students were generally not counted as dropouts because the districts provided active home-bound and in-hospital instruction. Even when students failed to proceed with coursework under these circumstances, we found no districts that then recategorized the individual as a dropout. Approved home-instruction programs (where they existed) provided another similar example of general agreement among the responding districts but with exceptions. Overall, such students were not counted as dropouts but the home program had to be either state or locally approved. Where it was not approved or in the case that emerged in Chicago where a student might stay home for religious reasons, then the students were uniformally counted as dropouts.

Similar agreement was seen among districts in the categorization of students who left school to join the Armed Services. All but one district (Portland) counted these students as dropouts. Portland normally does also except when/if the district determines that the student is pursuing a General Education (G.E.D.) in the military. In this case, students are treated as if they had simply transferred to another school system.

All but three districts generally agreed that students below grades seven or nine were not included in their dropout counts. Students under these grades or under compulsory attendance age were normally treated as truants (Chicago) or "lost-to-system" (Cleveland) and therefore not included in mandated dropout reports. Atlanta, however, does count a small number of underage children and New York City counts students below grade nine as dropouts if the student is over age 14. Also, we found only one instance where a district (Detroit) had students who graduated ahead of their class show up in the system's dropout count.

General agreement likewise existed for students who are no longer residents of the school district and are known to have transferred to another LEA. These students are not counted as dropouts as long as the original system knows where the student goes. In cases where the districts simply cannot find a student they usually do classify them as dropouts. Two exceptions were found, however. Minneapolis counts such students as "unknown" and Philadelphia uses a "whereabouts unknown (nondropout withdrawal)" code under the presumption that the student has moved from the district.

Leaving school for employment, employment training through Job Corp or vocational/technical/occupational school, or through work permits were also usually reasons by which schools classified students as dropouts. Exceptions existed where the program was able to grant G.E.D.s and where districts were uncertain about whether

the program or school had diploma-granting authority. Conversely, students on work-study programs were usually not counted as dropouts as long as the student continued to attend classes.

Another area of general agreement was over the counting of limited English-proficient students. All but three districts counted such students who left school as dropouts. The exceptions existed in cases where L.E.P. students were exempt from minimum competency exams (Atlanta) or where the tests were required to be taken in English.

The final area of general agreement involved students who left school over the Summer, i.e., students who were enrolled in school in June and did not return in September as expected, were not always counted as dropouts. Three districts in our sample reported their data, however, using nine-month counts (New York, Norfolk and Portland). Each of these districts also used fixed-date methods on which to base their dropout rates, so calculations were made by taking the difference between a beginning and end-or-year enrollment. Other districts used a full twelve-month reporting period. The contrast in the two methods could be stark if there was evidence to show that it was over the summer months when large number of students decided not to continue their education.

Outside these areas of general agreement was a variety of student categories, some of which would be expected to contain large numbers of students. For example, there was not much agreement over whether or not to count students as dropouts if they left school to pursue a General Education Diploma in any kind of program. While most respondent's dropout definitions indicated that transferring to another education setting did not constitute dropping out, it was clear that transferring for a G.E.D. might. We did not go into great detail on this point during the phone survey so our explanation here is mostly speculative. One problem may involve the fact that very few students actually leave a formal high school program in order to pursue a G.E.D., and it was in this way that the question was worded. The more likely scenario is that students leave for a variety of other reasons and then later decide to pursue a G.E.D. in a host of non-high school institutions, like the military or technical training settings. The second problem, which we will discuss in greater depth later, is that many LEAs have no way of knowing why a student left school and will simply code all students who leave for any but a small number of easily discernible reasons as dropouts. Whatever the difficulty, it is clear that there is no agreement over whether or not a student who leaves school to pursue a G.E.D. ought to be counted as a dropout.

A similar disagreement existed with the counting of students who have transferred to an unlicensed or uncredentialed school or program. Many school systems did not count such individuals as

dropouts because of the educational nature of the transfer and because the systems were unsure as to which such settings were or were not credentialed. A small number of districts did not count these students as dropouts because the students in such circumstances could not be taken off the school system's rolls. A larger set of districts, however, did count these students as dropouts because state law dictated that the educational program must be state approved. In addition, some districts considered the students to be in violation of state compulsory attendance laws and therefore subject to arrest. It would seem unlikely, however, that this category of transfers contained large enough numbers of students to throw rates much more out of comparability than they already are.

A related problem involved the counting of students who have re-enrolled in adult education or night classes. Much of the disagreement appears to stem from the definition of such coursework and whether or not it leads to a degree and whether or not the enrollment was so verified. In many districts the enrollments in adult education are not necessarily run against lists of dropouts to know whether the student emerged in this program after having left the regular school. In addition, some respondents used adult education or night classes to help make up a small number of courses needed to earn a diploma. Nearly a quarter of the respondents, however counted all such individuals as dropouts.

The category of disagreement that may contain one of the largest numbers of students involved separately-enrolled, special education students who may or may not be exempt from minimum competency tests and who may not be likely to receive a regular diploma. There is some anecdotal evidence to indicate that such students dropout of school in disproportionately large numbers. As we discussed in the section of this report on enrollments, many such students are not included in the district-wide enrollment that is used for dropout reporting or are having separate rates calculated for them. The identical situation exists with the counting of such students as dropouts. The norm was that handicapped students were less likely to be counted as dropouts if (1) they were not included in the regular high school enrollment and were specially-enrolled or ungraded, (2) they were exempt from the regular minimum competency exams (which appears to involve only a very small number of students), or (3) they were more likely to receive a diploma designed for handicapped students than a regular one. This category of students and potential dropouts appears to involve some of the largest numbers and greatest vagaries in the overall dropout reports that we looked at. Still, there were about 75% of the respondents who simply said that such students were counted as dropouts no matter what their handicapping condition or enrollment status.

The categorization of students who were incarcerated or lived in families of seasonal or migrant workers also presented some disagreement, although the numbers involved here are probably quite small. Most city districts have few to no migrant students but those that do are at odds over the counting of such students as dropouts. About 75% of the respondents include migrant students in their dropout reports with no specific coding of them. Philadelphia is an exception in that migrants have a separate dropout code. The remaining 25% of the respondents do not include these students as dropouts when they leave, under the presumption that even if records are not requested these students re-enroll in some other school system. Incarcerated students present a similar situation in involving small numbers of individuals but tremendous disagreement in whether or not to count them. Many of the districts run educational programs in the prisons and appear in these cases to be less likely to count incarcerated students as dropouts. These types of individuals are more often treated as if they had simply transferred to another school system. Where prison programs are not common or they do not lead to a degree, the respondents were more likely to count the students as dropouts.

The final category of students over which there was little agreement involved individuals who had been expelled from the public school system. Some school systems (e.g. Philadelphia) cannot expel students from the system, but many who can classify the individuals as dropouts. The differences among respondents appear to be related to whether or not the student re-enrolled in a private school in the city or in another LEA. In these cases, the respondents were less likely to count the student as a dropout. The Cleveland School System presented another quirk in only being able to expel students for a semester at a time--not permanently.

c. Verification of Dropout Counts. The third major vagary in the reporting of dropout rates involved the verification of the students' status. The main general finding from the phone survey was that only those kinds of students for which the system had a definable code were at all likely to be verified as having left school and for what reason. As one can see from Table 2, there was wide disparity in the coding systems. Obviously, only those kinds of students to which a district assigns a particular code are likely to have their whereabouts verified. But even within the set of students for which there was a code, there was disagreement among districts about whether and how extensively a student's status was verified. Verification problems obviously also existed depending on the type or code of student. The death of a student, for instance, did not require a death certificate before taking the individual off the rolls. Runaway students by their very nature were difficult to verify.

The most common areas where verification was required by the respondents appeared to involve pregnancy/marriage, "needed at home", further education through G.E.D. or vocational/occupational or technical training, military service, transfers to another LEA or private schools, and employment. As we have seen, however, even these categories--once verified--did not necessarily bring any great certainty about the counts. In addition, respondents mentioned having differing degrees of confidence in the personnel collecting the information at the school site and in central office student records administrators. It was clear from phone discussions with respondents that differing personnel and methods were sometimes used from school to school to collect information about what happened to the students. It was also clear that some districts actively searched for students once they disappeared from school while others simply waited to be notified by parents or by other school systems or educational agencies when records were needed.

Another problem also arose in that it was clear that some parents do not request transcripts when their child transfers, especially in cases where the records may show lack of achievement or discipline problems. Some parents appear to be wanting to give their child a fresh start at a new LEA or private school with a blank record.

The issue of student records appeared to have its own unique set of problems. Many school systems relied on requests for records as one of the main mechanisms for verifying that a student had moved or transferred to another LEA or private school rather than having had dropped out. A number of districts, however, indicated that the requesting and transmitting of student records from one system to another was far from perfect and in some cases nearly non-existent. In at least some districts, record transfers are not reported to the central office. This general problem of records transfers and requests, and the more particular problem of very uneven verification have probably introduced as much statistical noise to the challenge of developing a common dropout metric as either the definitional issues or the enrollment counting. Further work by the Research Directors is needed before any new surveys are done.

d. Period Required Before Considered a Dropout. The survey conducted by the Council did not request information on the length of time a student needed to be absent from school before being coded as a dropout. The Council's suggested definition used a 45-day period but it was clear that many districts used periods as short as 30 days. We are not sure what effect the "absence period" has on the vagaries in the rates but presumably the shorter the period, the higher the rate. We are also not sure whether or not some districts use a set absence period but simply wait until the end of the year before tallying up the losses. Because of this lack of clarity, we would urge that any future surveys contain requests for such information.

e. Sources of Dropout Data. The Council survey did ask for information related to the source of school systems' dropout statistics. Eleven of the 17 (64.7%) respondents completed the question but we are unsure of the general utility of the responses given the discussion above. Only three of the respondents indicated that the student him/her self was used as at least a partial source for determining dropout status. The same three districts (Toledo, Dade County and Los Angeles) also indicated that they used parents to help determine the status of the former student. And it was also the same three districts which indicated that they used either counselors or teachers as sources. All districts reported using the school site, meaning principals, registrars, secretaries or clerks. What was not clear was where the school's data originated and how it was collected. This variable also needs additional refinement in any future surveys.

Differences in Community Transiency/Mobility Rates:

While the factors related to enrollment, dropout definitions, verification, absence periods, and data sources are at least theoretically within the control of the school systems; factors involving the community itself are not--but clearly effect the vagaries in the dropout rates from one city to another. Chief among these is the issue of student transiency or mobility in and out of the city and its schools. We did not as part of this survey take a formal look at the actual transiency or mobility rates among city school students but would expect that such rates would be greater in highly urbanized areas than in other types of settings. We would recommend that further work on dropout statistics attempt to determine at least general population mobility through Census Bureau data if such information has been collected.

From other data available in the Council's files, it is clear that mobility is a major factor in urban school demographics and would have tremendous effects on the comparability of dropout rates from one city to another. Dallas, for instance, has a mobility rate--called "average daily transaction": of .28 per 100 students, meaning that on any given day about 360 students are newly enrolled, re-enroll or transfer in or out of the school system. While not reporting in the same metric, the Denver schools report a mobility rate of nearly 70%, reflecting 5664 students who had left the system, 3939 who had returned and a grand total of 40,680 of the system's 58,205 students who had changed residence or enrollment status over the course of the school year. Minneapolis reports a 42.5% mobility rate.

The mobility or transiency rates will differ from one city to another depending on the type and makeup of the population and the prevailing industries in the area. For example, cities which have large numbers of refugees, immigrants, aliens or migrants would be expected to have higher mobility rates than others. Similarly,

cities with industries that are seasonal or involve heavy influx of residents over the course of the year would also be expected to have higher mobility rates. The city of Seattle is a perfect example of both situations. It has both a large refugee and seasonal migrant population, and as a port city employs large numbers of people in trade and fishing who regularly travel to and from Alaska. Minneapolis is a similar situation.

The effect of this mobility on school enrollments and dropout rates is obvious, especially in light of very haphazard records transfers. The effect itself is probably most felt during the summer months and the early Fall. The situation in Seattle is that many migrant and seasonal workers will leave the city with their children in the Summer and not return until November. By the time they have returned, the school system as of October (which is their fixed-date) has counted them as dropouts. Again, similar dynamics operate in cities like Minneapolis and Norfolk which has a large number of temporarily-based military children. The annual dropout rates of these cities consequently are larger than one might expect even if all other factors were held constant.

Another factor that related to schools but is not necessarily controlled by them that may effect dropout rates involves court-ordered desegregation plans. While we do not have a large enough sample of districts to make an accurate test of this notion, anecdotal information indicates that in some cities the dropout rates can be pushed up by the presence of such orders. We presume that many of these dropouts are in fact students who have left the public schools to avoid the order and whose records were not accurately specified or transferred. The high dropout rates in Cleveland, Norfolk and possibly in Milwaukee (although the district is under a controversial voluntary plan rather than a court order) may be attributable to this phenomenon. The Council's next round of survey work needs to take this factor into greater account.

Results of Survey:

After all of this narrative, it is difficult to say whether the data submitted by the respondents can be used to draw any substantive conclusions about dropouts themselves. What is clear is that it would be the height of folly to attempt to rank districts on the extent of their dropout problems, given all the vagaries we have just discussed. It is absolutely impossible to say with any certainty that district X has a greater or lesser dropout problem than district Y.

We can, however, do a number of things with the existing data while common metrics are being devised. These include preliminary analyses of the survey results by grade, race and sex. In addition, we have asked the districts for information on numbers of graduates to form some basis for judging the extent of the dropout problem.

First of all, we have listed dropout statistics in Table 3 starting with grade nine even though some districts were able to supply data for grades seven and eight. We did this in order to lend some additional comparability, however minor, to the overall rates. About the best that could be done was to analyze grade-by-grade ranks to determine which grades ranked highest in dropout rates. Table 3 below shows dropout ranks for the responding districts by grade.

Table 3. Dropout Ranks by Grade Level in Selected Great City Schools*

	Grade 9	Grade 10	Grade 11	Grade 12	Other
Albuquerque	4	3	2	1	
Atlanta	4	3	2	4	1
Chicago	3	1	2	4	
Cleveland	4	1	2	3	
Dade County	3	1	2	3	
Detroit	5	4	2	1	3
Los Angeles		1	3	2	
Milwaukee	2	4	3	1	
Minneapolis	4	3	2	1	
New York City	4	1	2	3	
Norfolk	1	2	3	4	
Omaha	4	3	1	2	
Philadelphia	4	1	2	3	5
Portland	4	3	1	2	
Seattle	1	2	3	4	
Toledo	5	4	3	1	2
Mode	4	1	2	1	--
Mean	3.53	2.31	2.19	2.44	--

The data tend to be a bit ambiguous but grade 9 appears to experience the lowest dropout rates in the responding districts. THis is probably because compulsory age laws are set in such a way that attendance through the ninth grade is fairly well mandatory. After that, the patterns are not quite as clear. Eleventh graders consistently show the second highest rates while tenth and twelfth graders are often the more likely to drop out. It appears that the largest percentage of dropouts are found immediately after compulsory attendance ends in grades 10 and before graduation in grade 12.

We are unsure about how these results jibe with other research or NCES data. NCES data are not reported by grade and we have not culled the literature for studies on grade differences. The Council's grade data need to be interpreted in light of whatever other studies exist, however, which is a chore left undone at this point.

The Council's survey also asked districts to report their dropout data by race. Again, our analysis can only look to see which groups consistently ranked high or low, rather than computing an average rate per group. The data are complete for thirteen of the sixteen responding districts. American Indian students had the highest dropout rates in seven of the districts, making these students the most dropout prone of the five racial groups--however small their overall numbers. Hispanic students had the highest dropout rates in four districts and the second highest in another five, resulting in their being the second most dropout prone of the five groups. Black students had the highest dropout rates in one of the districts but had the second highest in seven districts and the third highest in another two. White students had the highest dropout rates in only one district (Cleveland--which has a court-ordered desegregation plan), the second highest in none but the lowest or second lowest in six districts. Asian students had the highest dropout rates in only one district (Albuquerque) and the lowest in eight, making this group the least dropout prone of the five.

In general, these data jibe with those collected by the NCES. NCES data consistently show American Indian students having the highest overall dropout rates and Hispanics having the second. By-in-large, the Council's survey showed Hispanic students with the first or second highest dropout rates. NCES data show Hispanic rates as the highest among Whites, Black and Hispanic students. We are unclear as to why the Council's data do not show complete consistence with NCES for Hispanic students, except that our data were reported for grades 9-12 only and there is some evidence to indicate that Hispanic students are prone to dropout earlier than this. Clearly though, Hispanic and Black students show higher dropout rates than either Asians or Whites.

The final demographic split on the dropout data was by sex. Table 5 shows the results. The data here are very consistent. Thirteen of the 14 responding districts showed dropout rates higher for males than females. Only in Toledo were rates higher for females than males. The Council's data are perfective consistent with NCES data on the sex of dropouts.

Beyond the three demographic characteristics of grade, race, and sex; the Council's survey did not yield enough usuable data to analyze. These included data on the age of student dropouts, their language status, track in school (i.e., regular, special education, vocational), or reasons for dropping. Data on reasons for dropping out yielded particularly useless information. We would suggest that these questions be dropped from future surveys until the overall metrics were worked out to everyone's satisfaction, and that the other areas be reviewed for revision or dropping also.

Table 4. Dropout Rates by Race In Selected Great City Schools (Grades 9-12 only)*

	Black	Hispanic	White	American Indian	Asian
Albuquque	5	2	3	4	1
Atlanta					
Chicago	4	2	3	1	5
Cleveland	4	3	1	2	5
Dade County	2	3	4	1	5
Detroit	2	1	3		
Los Angeles	2	1	3	4	5
Milwaukee	2	1	4	3	
Minneapolis	2	3	4	1	5
New York City					
Norfolk					
Omaha	3	2	4	1	5
Philadelphia	2	1	3	5	4
Portland	3	2	3	1	5
Seattle	2	3	4	1	5
Toledo	5	2	4	1	3
Mode	2	2	4	1	5
Mean	2.92	2.00	3.31	2.08	4.36

Table 5. Dropout Rates by Race in Selected Great City Schools (9-12)*

	Male	Female
Abluquerque	1	2
Atlanta	1	2
Chicago	1	2
Cleveland	1	2
Dade County	1	2
Detroit	1	2
Los Angeles	1	2
Milwaukee	1	2
Minneapolis	1	2
New York	1	2
Norfolk		
Omaha	1	2
Philadelphia	1	2
Portland		
Seattle	1	2
Toledo	2	1
Mode	1	2
Mean	1.07	1.93

Discussion and Recommendations:

Drawing conclusions from the preceeding analysis is extremely risky. First and foremost, it is safe to conclude that there is no real commonality in the ways city school districts define and count their dropouts. This situation is likely no different from other types of districts. One price that the country has paid for its highly decentralized, locally governed schools is that not only instruction and educational content and quality vary widely but our mechanisms for monitoring that education do also. Education and education statistics have evolved for over a Cenury at each locale to meet local needs in the same disparate ways plant life has evolved on the earth. Trying to arrive at a uniform way of measuring dropouts is a little like trying to get all apples to look like oranges. Still, the need exists to answer the question "How many students dropout and why?" in order to determine if the problem is solvable.

The overarching goal of developing a common metric by which cities would report their dropout data was not met--in the short term--by this project. In retrospect it was unreasonable to think that it could. The cities themselves did not know--at that point--how differently each measured droppint out; and too many factors outside the control of the LEAs could not be dealt with e.g. differing state laws and local political needs.

While the goal of this effort was not met in the short-term, it was

successful in the longer. The results of this work have been used in three ways already. The first way was to help shape the debate over how to structure a provision in the Dropout Prevention and ReEntry Act authorizing a national study of school dropout programs and definitions. An initial effort to build legislation around a national data bank and to distribute funds accordingly was better informed through the Council's work on the technicalities of dropout statistics. The second way the results have been used to-date involves a new effort by the General Accounting Office (GAO) to conduct a national survey of dropout programs and an analysis of dropout data. The analyses of dropout data has now been completed by the GAO and published in a report released to the House Education and Labor Committee called School Dropouts: An Overview of the Extent and Nature of The Problem. The report itself was initiated due to meetings that the Council and the Chicago Schools had with members of that Committee.

In addition, the results of this phase of the project have served to inform an effort by The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) to design a national dropout definition acceptable to the states. It was clear from our own work that a uniform metric was impossible without state involvement. The Great City Schools draft report was used by CCSSO, and a staff representative was a member of the dropout advisory panel. The outcome of that effort is being taken to the Chief's annual convention in November, 1986, for adoption. It is expected that the bulk of the states will begin adopting a uniform metric within a matter of years.

On the basis of its work so far with dropout statistics the Great City Schools' Directors of Research and Evaluation would make the following recommendations.

1. That the U.S. Congress approve the Dropout Prevention and ReEntry Act next year with a national study of dropout programs, and appropriate $50.0m in FY88 to carry out the Act.

2. That the Council itself continue with its initiative on dropout prevention by publishing the second volume of this work containing specific data on successful dropout prevention programs in its member cities.

3. That the Council continue to work with the CCSSO on its effort to standardize state dropout reporting methods, as part of its state education assessment study.

4. That The CCSSO and the individual states in the effort to standardize definitions pay strict attention to unique factors in cities overwhich schools may or may not have control, e.g. mobility rates and others.

5. That The CCSSO effort on dropout statistics, in its implementation, report on how it is handling the types of technical issues raised in this study and estimate the degree of noncomparability of data from state sources.

APPENDIX

1. Council Districts Responding to Survey with Usable Data
2. Denominator Used by Responding Districts to Calculate Dropout Rate
3. Dropout Survey Summary Form A
4. Dropout Survey Summary Form B

Council Districts Responding to Survey With Usable Data

School District	Reporting Period
1. Albuquerque	SY 1984-85
2. Atlanta	SY 1984-85
3. Chicago	SY 1984-85
4. Cleveland	SY 1984-85
5. Dade County	SY 1983-84
6. Detroit	SY 1983-84
7. Indianapolis	SYs 1981-82 through 1984-85
8. Los Angeles	SY 1983-84
9. Milwaukee	SY 1983-84
10. Minneapolis	SY 1984-85
11. New York City	SY 1983-84
12. Norfolk	SY 1984-85
13. Omaha	SY 1984-85
14. Philadelphia	SY 1983-84
15. Portland	SY 1984-85
16. Seattle	SY 1983-84
17. Toledo	SY 1984-85

Denominator Used by Responding Districts to Calculate Dropout Rates

School District	Denominator
1. Albuquerque	180-day Average Daily Membership
2. Atlanta	Cumulative count of all names
3. Chicago	Enrollment as of October 31st
4. Cleveland	Average Daily Membership
5. Dade County	Enrollment at end of first month
6. Detroit	Enrollment as of December 1st
7. Indianapolis	--
8. Los Angeles*	Enrollment as of first Friday of October
9. Milwaukee	Enrollment as of 3rd Friday of school year
10. Minneapolis	Cumulative count of all names
11. New York City	Enrollment as of October 31st
12. Norfolk	Enrollment as of June 15, 1984
13. Omaha	Enrollment as of 4th Friday of September
14. Philadelphia	Cumulative count of all names
15. Portland	Enrollment as of October 1st
16. Seattle	Enrollment as of October 1st
17. Toledo	Enrollment as of Friday of frist full week in October

* Los Angeles operates a year-round instructional program.

Instruction Sheet

Enclosed are two survey forms for reporting 1984-85 dropout statistics in your school district.

Form A (yellow) - Use this form if you can report dropout data according to the definition agreed upon by the DRE's at the Council of Great City School's Meeting and ratified by the Research and Policy Committee.

> "A dropout will be defined as any person who leaves school prior to graduation or completion of a formal high school education or legal equivalent, who does not within 45 school days enter another public or private educational institution or school program."

Form B (blue) - Use this form if your dropout data are collected according to a definition specific to your school district.

Note: Please remember to write your district's definition in Section B of Form B.

Council of Great City Schools

DROPOUT SURVEY SUMMARY FORM A

A. General Description

School Year: _____ School District _____

Contact Person: _____ Telephone No. ( ) _____

Data Reporting Period: From _____ (beginning date) to _____ (ending date)

B. Council definition printed here:

> "A dropout will be defined as any person who leaves school prior to graduation or completion of a formal high school education or legal equivalent, who does not within 45 school days enter another public or private educational institution or school program".

C. School District Population Grades 7-12; i.e., the number of students enrolled in each grade in the school district as of the morning date.

Grades	
7	_____
8	_____
9	_____
10	_____
11	_____
12	_____
Total	_____

NOTE: FOR ITEMS D-K REFER TO SCHOOL DROPOUTS ONLY. ENTER RAW NUMBERS IN BLANKS.

D. Dropout statistics by Grade Level, Ethnic Group, and Gender

	American Indian	Asian/Pac. Island	Black	Hispanic	White	Male	Female	Total
Grade 7								
Grade 8								
Grade 9								
Grade 10								
Grade 11								
Grade 12								
Ungraded								
Total								

E. Age (Based upon birthdate)

	Male	Female	Total
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19 and over			

F. Language Status

English Only			
Fluent-English Speaking			
Limited-English Speaking			

G. Status (Program) in School

Regular			
Special Education			
Pregnant Minor			
Other (Specify) _____			

H. Reasons for Dropping (Major/Single Reason)
(Tally the first or major reason listed)

	Male	Female	Total
Expulsion			
Low Achievement			
Marriage			
Pregnancy			
Needed at Home (under legal age)			
Low motivation/interest			
Overage (18+)			
Training, not educational			
Work			
Armed Forces			
Poor Attendance			
Did not return after summer break			
Family Problems			
School Adjustment Problems			
Personal Illness			
Problem with Teachers			
Boredom/Disliked School			
Other (Specify) _____			

I. Reasons for Dropping (Multiple Reasons)
(Tally all reasons listed)

	Male	Female	Total
Expulsion			
Low Achievement			
Marriage/Pregnancy			
Needed at Home (under legal age)			
Low motivation/interest			

Overage (18+)	____	____	____
Training, not educational	____	____	____
Work	____	____	____
Armed Forces	____	____	____
Poor Attendance	____	____	____
Did not return after summer break	____	____	____
Family Problems	____	____	____
School Adjustment Problems	____	____	____
Personal Illness	____	____	____
Problems with Teachers	____	____	____
Boredom/Disliked School	____	____	____
Other (Specify) _____	____	____	____

J. Of the total number of dropouts identified by the 45 days criterion, how many students returned to your school district after the 45 days within the data reporting periods? ____ ____ ____

K. Source of data: Student (dropout) _____ Parent of dropout _____

Teacher _____ Counselor _____ Other (Specify) _____

Council of Great City Schools

DROPOUT SURVEY SUMMARY FORM B

A. General Description

School Year: _____ School District _____

Contact Person: _____ Telephone No. ( ) _____

Data Reporting Period: From _____ (beginning date) to _____ (ending date)

B. 1984-85 Dropout Definition for your school district

C. School District Population Grades 7-12; i.e., the number of students enrolled in each grade in the school district as of the norming date.

Grades	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
Total	

NOTE: FOR ITEMS D-K, REFER TO SCHOOL DROPOUTS ONLY. ENTER RAW NUMBERS IN BLANKS.

D. Dropout statistics by Grade Level, Ethnic Group, and Gender

	American Indian	Asian/Pac. Island	Black	Hispanic	White	Male	Female	Total
Grade 7								
Grade 8								
Grade 9								
Grade 10								
Grade 11								
Grade 12								
Upgraded								
Total								

E. Age (Based upon birthdate)

	Male	Female	Total
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19 and over			

F. Language Status

	Male	Female	Total
English Only			
Fluent-English Speaking			
Limited-English Speaking			

G. Status (Program) in School

Regular			
Special Education			
Pregnant Minor			
Other (Specify) _____			

H. Reasons for Dropping (Major/Single Reason)
(Tally the first or major reason listed)

	Male	Female	Total
Expulsion			
Low Achievement			
Marriage			
Pregnancy			
Needed at Home (under legal age)			
Low motivation/interest			
Overage (18+)			
Training, not educational			
Work			
Armed Forces			
Poor Attendance			
Did not return after summer break			
Family Problems			
School Adjustment Problems			
Personal Illness			
Problems with Teachers			
Boredom/Disliked School			
Other (Specify) _____			

I. Reasons for Dropping (Multiple Reasons)
(Tally all reasons listed)

	Male	Female	Total
Expulsion			
Low Achievement			
Marriage/Pregnancy			
Needed at Home (under legal age)			
Low motivation/interest			
Overage (18+)			
Training, not educational			
Work			
Armed Forces			
Poor Attendance			
Did not return after summer break			
Family Problems			
School Adjustment Problems			
Personal Illness			
Problems with Teachers			
Boredom/Disliked School			
Other (Specify) _____			

J. If your school district's definition of a dropout had a time criterion, e.g., number of days, how many students returned to your school district after the time criterion? _____

K. Source of data: Student (dropout) _____ Parent of dropout _____
Teacher _____ Counselor _____ Other (Specify) _____